



Indiana State Department of Health

Quick Facts

About...HIV/AIDS

What is HIV/AIDS?

HIV is the virus that causes AIDS. You can have HIV in your body for many years and not feel or look sick. HIV slowly makes it harder for your body to fight off diseases. It is passed through blood, semen (cum), vaginal fluids and breast milk.

How is HIV/AIDS spread?

You can get HIV from having sex (vaginal, anal or oral) with someone who has HIV. You can also get it by sharing needles for drugs or tattoos with someone who has HIV. If you are pregnant and have HIV, you can give it to your baby before birth, during birth, or when you breast-feed.

You can **NOT** get HIV through the air, or by shaking hands or hugging a person with HIV. You won't get HIV from toilets, insect bites, or from sharing food or dishes.

Who is at risk for HIV/AIDS?

Anyone can get HIV/AIDS. Persons having unprotected vaginal, anal, or oral sex with men who have sex with men, multiple partners, or anonymous partners are at risk. All women who are pregnant should be tested during each pregnancy. Persons that have injected drugs or steroids or shared equipment (such as needles, syringes, works) with others are at risk. Persons diagnosed with or treated for hepatitis, tuberculosis (TB), or a sexually transmitted disease (STD), like syphilis are at risk.

How do I know if I have HIV/AIDS?

Go to a clinic or doctor to take a blood or oral test for HIV. Call the number below to find a test center near you. If you have been exposed to someone with HIV/AIDS

or you have symptoms that match those described below, your doctor may test you for HIV/AIDS.

What are the symptoms of HIV/AIDS?

You can't tell by looking if someone has HIV. Most people with HIV look healthy and feel fine. They often don't know they have it, but they can still give HIV to someone else.

Later signs of HIV/AIDS may be a lot like some other illnesses. You may feel tired, lose weight, and have a cough, diarrhea, or fevers. You may get other diseases that your body can no longer fight off.

How is HIV/AIDS treated?

There is still no cure for HIV and AIDS. But it is better to find out early if you have it. There are new medicines and other ways to help you stay healthy for a longer time.

How can HIV/AIDS be prevented?

Abstinence (not having sex) is the best way to protect yourself from STDs and HIV/AIDS. If you have sex, using a latex condom (rubber) is the best way to protect yourself from HIV. Limit your number of sex partners. The more people you have sex with, the greater your chance of getting HIV. Don't share needles for drugs or tattoos. If you do share, clean the needles with bleach and water.

All information presented is intended for public use. For more information and clinic locations call the National STD/HIV InfoLine at 1-800-342-AIDS.

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